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Los Angeles
Area Chamber of Commerce

June 30, 1998

Attn: Mr. Rick Breitenbach
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Breitenbach:

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce endorses the CALFED program and strongly supports the ongoing process bringing the many Bay-Delta stakeholders together in a meaningful dialogue to address the water needs of the State of California. The continued success of the CALFED program depends on the ability of the stakeholders to reach an agreement. It is the continued role of CALFED to seek solutions addressing the needs of urban, rural, agricultural, environmental, and recreational users of water resources.

The Chamber has had a longstanding policy supporting the flexible management of water resources, recognizing the need for a balanced water program providing the best solution for the benefit of all Californians.

The solution alternative chosen to achieve a Bay-Delta fix should address all of the following issues:

- *Water Quality* – The quality of the water delivered through the State Water Project should be improved significantly. As we put in place programs to increase water supply, we should also ensure a corresponding increase in water quality. Water quality has recently become a public health issue with attention drawn to the presence of bromides in drinking water supplies and their potential impact on pregnant women. Improving water quality at the source dramatically reduces the need for additional water treatment at the plant and reduces life-cycle costs. All indications are that future laws and regulations are trending toward tougher requirements on water quality in response to a general public demand. CALFED should work on resolving water quality concerns for all of California.
- *Water Availability* – The total volume of water delivered to Southern California should be increased in direct proportion to the increase in demand. In order to sustain the growing population and economy of Southern California, this growth should be met with additional water supplies. Southern California has been a leader in water conservation and recycling, having spent approximately \$8 billion to implement such programs, and the Chamber has been active in encouraging local efforts to reduce overall consumption. Furthermore, the development of water conservation technologies and related research and development programs stimulate our economy while benefiting the State's water users as a whole. It is vital for Southern California to receive enough water to accommodate our growing population, meet the water needs for business and industry, and maintain the economic vitality of our region.
- *Shared Cost* – The Chamber believes that the chosen solution alternative's cost be shared equitably among all stakeholders in direct proportion to the benefits received, and should not place any undue burden on any single region or stakeholder group. Southern California

should pay its fair share for the water itself and any corresponding Bay-Delta improvements. Allocation of revenues from any legislated funding source should also be implemented fairly, and trigger mechanisms which determine the release of funds must be utilized to ensure their fair and timely distribution. Shared costs are critical to achieving a compromise for the Bay-Delta, and all parties need to feel they are on an equal footing with other stakeholders.

- *Environment* – The Chamber supports the restoration of the Bay-Delta ecosystem, seeing the need for improving the habitat of fish and wildlife in this estuary as absolutely critical. The Chamber recognizes that our natural resources are one of California's greatest assets, improving our overall quality of life and providing recreational opportunities for residents and non-residents alike.

The Chamber finds that these issues may be achieved with several important programs that should be included in the Revised Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR):

- (1) First, adequate water storage facilities should be in place to allow for drought conditions. Adequate off-stream facilities are essential to meet the anticipated demands and to provide reliability of supply.
- (2) Secondly, we should have a reliable conveyance system to transport water according to the various stakeholder needs.
- (3) Lastly, we support a water market to help with the efficient transfer and allocation of water. Such a market would provide a safety valve and could potentially alleviate other Bay-Delta program costs elsewhere.

These criteria represent the position of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce on the Bay-Delta solution alternatives as put forth by CALFED in the latest Draft EIS/EIR, and this letter serves as the Chamber's written public comment.

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce looks forward to making additional comments with the issuance of the Revised Draft EIS/EIR to be released by the end of the year before preparation of the Final Programmatic EIS/EIR in 1999.

Sincerely,



Alison Winter
Chairman



Ezunial Burts
President

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